

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO LUSAKA PRETORIA BLANTYRE
DAR ES SALAAM LOURENCO MARQUES FROM LONDON 20 AUG 73:

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TAGS: PINT, RH, MZ

SUBJECT: LONDON NEWSPAPER REPORTS RHODESIAN OPERATIONS IN
MOZAMBIQUE

1. LONDON EVENING STANDARD AUGUST 20 PUBLISHED EXCLUSIVE
REPORT BY REPORTER MAX HASTINGS, WHO HAD JUST RETURNED FROM
THREE WEEKS AMONG THE FARMING COMMUNITY OF NORTHEAST RHO-
DESIA, IN WHICH HE SAID HE HAD INFORMATION THAT THE RHO-
DESIAN ARMY IS OPERATING IN STRENGTH IN MOZAMBIQUE. HASTINGS'
ARTICLE SAYS THAT 400 MEN OF THE RHODESIAN LIGHT INFANTRY HAVE
JOINED THE SPECIAL AIR SERVICES IN CONDUCTING SWEEPS INTO
MOZAMBIQUE TO SEARCH OUT TERRORIST BASES. THESE SWEEPS LAST
FOR TWO TO THREE WEEKS WITH UNITS BEING LIFED BY HELICOPTER
INTO THE OPERATING AREAS.

2. HASTINGS' INFORMATION COMES FROM INTERVIEWS WITH RHO-
DESIAN FARMERS IN THE NORTHEAST AREA OF THE COUNTRY WHERE
TERRORISTS HAVE BEEN OPERATING SINCE LAST DECEMBER. SOME
OF HIS SOURCES ARE MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL SECURITY FORCES.

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ONE NCO SAID THAT THE REASON FOR RHODESIAN INCURSIONS INTO

MOZAMBIQUE WAS THAT THEY WERE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PORTUGUESE ABILITY TO "HOLD THEIR GROUND IN MOZAMBIQUE." THE PROSPECT OF A PORTUGUESE COLLAPSE WAS IN HASTINGS' WORDS "A STRATEGIC NIGHTMARE" FOR THE RHODESIANS BECAUSE IT WOULD EXPOSE THEIR ENTIRE EASTERN BORDER TO THE TERRORISTS. HE SPECULATED THAT PERHAPS RHODESIAN OPERATIONS INSIDE MOZAMBIQUE HAD BEEN INITIATED AS MUCH TO STIFFEN PORTUGUESE WILL AS TO DEAL WITH THE TERRORIST SANCTUARIES.

3. IN DISCUSSING THE EFFECT OF THE TERRORISTS' CAMPAIGN ON RHODESIA, HASTINGS SAYS THAT THE EFFORT TO MOBILIZE THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN ON A SCALE THAT WILL BE DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN INDEFINITELY. HE THEN GOES ON TO DESCRIBE IN DETAIL SOME OF THE SECURITY MEASURES WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY WHITE RHODESIAN FARMERS, INCLUDING SUCH PHYSICAL BARRIERS AS 10-FT. FENCES SURROUNDING FARM HOUSES WHICH ARE BATHED BY SEARCH LIGHTS AT NIGHT. EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW MONTHS, SUCH AS ATTACKS ON FARMS, MINING OF ROADS AND ISOLATED MURDERS HAVE BROUGHT HOME TO THE FARMING COMMUNITY ITS VULNERABILITY EVEN TO LIMITED TERRORISM, HASTINGS WRITES. HIS SOURCES TOLD HIM THAT "COUNTRY PEOPLE" NOW BELIEVE THAT TERRORISM CANNOT BE CRUSHED ALTOGETHER. RATHER THEY TALK OF AIMING TO CONFINE IT TO AN "ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE."

4. FULL TEXT BEING POUCHED DEPARTMENT AND LOURENCO MARQUES.
SOHM UNQUOTE ROGERS

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